



HS-1 Seahorses



A 19 June 1997 ceremony marked the disestablishment (officially 30 June) of Helicopter Antisubmarine Squadron (HS) 1 after more than 45 years of service. Cdr. Mark K. Adrick was the last CO of the *Seahorses*.

As its designation implied, HS-1 was the Navy's first antisubmarine helicopter squadron, and served as an operational fleet squadron from its establishment on 3 October 1951 in NAS Key West, Fla., until 1960, when the *Seahorses* assumed the role of fleet replacement training for East Coast HS squadrons.

As a pioneering squadron, HS-1 played a significant role in developing the antisubmarine warfare (ASW) capability of the naval helicopter. The squadron initially was equipped with HUP-1/2 *Retrievers*, first delivered in February 1952, and soon briefly acquired an HTL *Sioux* and a TBM *Avenger* for training use. By 1953, the HRS-2/3 and

HO4S-3 were also in the squadron's inventory. An SNB trainer was used for liaison purposes from 1955 until 1960. The HSS-1 (SH-34G) *Seabat* arrived in October 1955, replacing the HUP and the HO4S-3 in 1956. The night-capable HSS-1N (SH-34J) was acquired in August 1958.

HS-1 began deploying ASW detachments on board the escort carriers *Gilbert Islands* (CVE 107) and, in the Mediterranean, *Siboney* (CVE 112) in 1953. During the remainder of the 1950s, HS-1 detachments also deployed on board *Valley Forge* (CVS 45), *Antietam* (CVS 36), *Leyte* (CVS 32), *Tarawa* (CVS 40), *Wasp* (CVS 18), *Kula Gulf* (CVE 108) and *Mindoro* (CVE 120). In 1959, by which time other HS squadrons had been established, HS-1 deployed as a full squadron to the Mediterranean on board *Lake Champlain* (CVS 39).

On 30 September 1960, HS-1 was absorbed as part of Replacement Antisubmarine Carrier Air Group 60 and assigned the role of replacement training, its primary mission for the next 37 years. In June 1961, the squadron received its first turbine-powered helicopter, the HSS-2 (SH-3A) *Sea King*. The last SH-34Js were transferred by July 1963. HS-1 also took on the role of training foreign pilots, crewmen and maintenance personnel, eventually training personnel from Canada, Spain, Italy, Brazil, Denmark, Iran, Argentina, Kuwait and the United Kingdom. HS-1 also trained the Marine Corps and Army crews that flew the presidential VH-3 fleet.

The *Seahorses* added the SH-3D to their fleet in October 1966, as well as the SH-3G utility version by 1970 and the SH-3H in September 1973. The squadron moved to NAS Quonset Point, R.I., in July 1970, and then to NAS Jacksonville, Fla., in December 1973. A VH-3A was assigned to the squadron in 1974 for maintenance training for the presidential helicopter fleet.

HS-1 resumed an operational role in October 1977 when Helicopter Combat Support Squadron (HC) 2 was disestablished. HS-1 took over two SH-3G detachments overseas: Det 1, which supported Commander Middle East Force, and Det 3, which supported Commander Sixth Fleet. The squadron also provided torpedo recovery services in the Bahamas and plane guard and logistics for carrier workups and North Atlantic deployments.

By 1987, HS-1 had acquired an HH-3A combat rescue version, and in 1989 added combat search and rescue training, including night-vision device training, to its responsibilities. In 1991, HS-1 became responsible for standardizing search and rescue training Navywide; this role came to include rescue swimmer and helicopter rappel training schools. By this time, the *Seahorses* were flying the SH-3H and SH-3G exclusively.

In January 1993, the SH-60F *Seahawk* began to replace the SH-3H in HS-1; the same year, the UH-3H utility version was acquired to train crews in that model. In October 1996, when a second HC-2 was established, the overseas detachments and the H-3 replacement training role were transferred to the new squadron. HS-1 continued as the East Coast SH-60F fleet



Above, an HS-1 SH-34G *Seabat* lands aboard a carrier. Opposite, in 1961 the *Seahorses* received their first turbine-powered helicopter, the SH-3A *Sea King*, shown here water taxiing.

